

REMARKS

The written description has been amended to provide direct correspondence between the language therein and the claims. No new matter has been introduced.

The Examiner has objected to the length of the Abstract. Appropriate amendment has been made.

Claims 1-39 are currently pending in the application. Claims 12, 36 and 37 are hereby cancelled. New claims 40-42 are presented for consideration.

Claim 19 stands objected to because of a typographical error which has been corrected.

Claims 14-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The Examiner states in paragraph 6 of the Action that there is no support for the "third state" recited in claim 14.

The Examiner's attention is directed to the written description on pages 31 and 32, beginning in the second full paragraph on page 31. Additional states of the actuating assembly are described therein. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is requested.

Claims 14-33 are indicated to be allowable subject to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 being addressed and claim 14 being rewritten in independent form. Claim 14 has been appropriately rewritten to be allowable. The remaining claims 15-33 depend cognately therefrom so as to likewise be allowable.

Claims 1-11, 13, 34, 35, 38 and 39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,406,075, to Rice et al. (Rice). Reconsideration

of the rejection of claims 1-11, 13, 34, 35, 38 and 39 and favorable consideration of new claims 40-42 are requested.

Claim 1 has been amended to characterize the first actuating assembly as comprising a push button actuator that is movable from a normal position into an actuated position to change the first actuating assembly from the first state into the second state. The blocking assembly in the second state blocks the operating path to prevent part of the first actuating assembly from being changed from one position into another position and the push button actuator from being moved from a normal position into the actuated position.

The Examiner is taking the position that a button on an electrical switch, as described by Rice in the bridging sentence between columns 4 and 5, corresponds to the claimed push button actuator in claim 12, the limitations of which are now incorporated into claim 1. Giving claim 1 that reading, there is no teaching or suggestion in Rice of any structure, as claimed, that would prevent movement of the allegedly corresponding push button actuator. Accordingly, claim 1 is believed allowable.

Claims 2-11, 13 and 34 depend cognately from claim 1 and recite further significant structural detail to further distinguish over Rice.

Claim 34 has been amended to characterize the first actuating system as comprising a self-contained module that is separate from the blocking assembly and is operably assembled by translating the self-contained module relative to the closure element, whereupon the first actuating assembly and the remainder of the components on the lock system become operably related without requiring securing of any part of the self-contained module to any of the remainder of the components.

Rice clearly does not teach or suggest such a modular arrangement. Instead, if the latch handle 16 is viewed as a module corresponding to the alleged first actuating system module, it can be seen that bolting of components thereto is required to assemble the structure in Rice.

Claim 35 has been amended to recite the first actuating system as comprising the self-contained module, that can be installed as a unit and operably assembled with the blocking assembly, without requiring any separate fastener acting between the blocking assembly and the first actuating assembly.

As noted above with respect to claim 34, Rice does not teach or suggest such a structure.

Accordingly, claim 35 is believed allowable.

Claims 38 and 39 each depend cognately from claim 35 and recite further significant structural detail to further distinguish over the prior art.

New claim 40 depends from claim 1 and characterizes the first actuating assembly as following movement of the push button actuator so that the part of the first actuating assembly moves in the operating path as the push button moves from the normal position into the actuated position.

Rice does not teach or suggest any corresponding push button actuator that mechanically drives at least one component.

New claim 41 corresponds to claim 1, as originally filed, and further characterizes the blocking assembly as comprising a plate that is pivotable upon an axis between a first position with the blocking assembly in the first state and a second position with the blocking assembly in the second state. The plate in the first position resides in the operating path

to block movement of the part of the first actuating assembly from the one position to the another position. The plate in its second position allows the part of the first actuating assembly to be moved from the one position into the another position.

Rice is completely devoid of any corresponding plate. To incorporate a plate would require a complete redesign of Rice's structure.

Claim 42 depends from claim 41 and recites further significant structural detail to further distinguish over Rice.

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-11, 13, 34, 35, 38 and 39, favorable consideration of new claims 40-42, and allowance of the case are requested.

The extra claim fee of \$100.00 is enclosed. Should additional fees be required in connection with this matter, please charge our deposit account No. 23-0785.

Respectfully submitted,

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